

Do you need a carers assessment ?

Contact the social services team of the local authority where the person you care for lives and ask for a carers assessment.

How will it help?

An assessment is not a test of your abilities as a carer. It will help provide an overview of your own needs and what you can manage. Some people also find they qualify for extra support.

Bear in mind that assessments don't just apply as a one-off when you start caring. As your circumstances change, or as the person's needs develop over time, you can ask to be reassessed.

Help is out here you just have to ask

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Taken from an original idea by the carers association



Are you a carer?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental or physical illness, or who needs extra help as they grow older.

Every day 6,000 people in the UK will start looking after someone close to them, unpaid. For many, caring is something that happens gradually when someone becomes older, or has a progressive illness, like Dementia. For others, it arises suddenly, for example as the result of an accident or stroke.

Caring is something that will affect each and every one of us, whether we become a carer or need care ourselves.

Here are 10 tips to help you with caring

1 Ask questions and talk about caring

The amount and type of support carers provide varies. You may spend a few hours a week picking up prescriptions and preparing meals for the person you care for. Or you could be providing emotional or personal care around the clock.

It's important that you think about how taking on this role might affect you and those around you. Caring can have a significant impact on your health, work, relationships, and finances. Start by talking to family and friends – do you have shared concerns and worries?

If you suddenly find that you are now a carer, try to make the time to find out about local organisations and support groups that can help you.

2 Find out about the condition

The chances are that there will be more than one condition affecting the person you're looking after.

Try talking to health professionals like a GP or consultant or us, in the first instance, as they / we can help you understand what to expect. Pharmacists can also explain the different types of medication the person you're caring for is taking and make you aware of any side effects. Don't be worried about repeating questions or asking for clarification.

There might also be other organisations specific to other conditions of the person you care for. Charities such as **Motor Neurone Disease Association, MS Society, Heart Foundation, Diabetes UK**

10 Get connected to support

The right support can change your life.

We have a list of all our services, groups, one to one meetings and events on our web page, social media pages also on posters and leaflets. We will be able to give you information on who and where to get short breaks to help you get time to yourself. A carer's assessment could help you get practical support such as assistance from care workers in the home. Please see the back page for more information.

Many of the Carers supporter charities provide advice, including **Age UK**, who can give information about social care for older people, and **Rethink Mental Illness** who provide information on the rights of carers supporting people with a mental illness. **Carers Trust** has a network of local services across the UK providing support to carers.

Find out about what help is available to purchase equipment and have adaptations made to the home of the person you care for. **Sense** provides information about different types of technology and communication aids available for people with complex disabilities, including deaf blindness

Make contact with us even if you think you do not need help yet, then at least you will know who we are and what we could help with in the future

8 Get connected with other carers

It's common to feel lonely or isolated as a carer, especially as friends and family might not understand how tough it can be, or even scared of Dementia.

Many find that meeting other carers, chatting face to face or online and getting support from those in a similar situation. Teesside Dementia Link Services support groups, can help. We run quite a few even one in the evening, you will find all the details on our web page and Face Book pages

All our services are free.

9 Prepare for change

The needs of the person you care for may change over time, as the Dementia progresses.

You may need additional support or respite care, It can be difficult to find the time to plan ahead – but there is support available to help you think about this, including from **Carers Trust, Social Services and Teesside Dementia Link Services.**

For progressive conditions like Dementia, Parkinson's, Diabetes organisations like Parkinson's association, Diabetes UK, and us can provide information about changes in the condition and how to manage these. If you're looking after someone with complex disabilities including deafness, blindness, **Sense** can give you specialist support through their 'Decisions to Make, and Steps to Take' toolkit on their website.

3 Look after your own health and wellbeing

You may struggle to get a good night's sleep and you may have to handle many difficult decisions at once. Sometimes stress can creep up on us, and it's helpful to talk about how we feel rather than hope the stress will go away. **Rethink Mental Illness** has resources on their website that can help you if you are worried about your own mental health. Where possible, finding time to exercise is important. Your leisure centre may offer a discount to carers, which could make it easier for you to go to an exercise class or go swimming. As a carer you are entitled to a free flu jab and if you have not seen your GP for some time, you should arrange a health check?

There may come a time where you feel like you need a break from caring. This could come from family and friends helping you out, using a care agency, employing a personal assistant or getting help from your local council or trust. **Teesside Dementia Link Services, Age UK** have information about getting a break and the **Carers Trust** provides grants towards the cost of short breaks, replacement support and holidays.

You are entitled to a carer's assessment, this about you and your personal health is an important part of that discussion.

4 If you are still working talk to your employer

If you are combining paid work with caring, it is worth checking out your company's policies and procedures in relation to caring responsibilities. You have a right to request flexible working and time off to look after dependants in an emergency, but your employer does not have to give you it.

Carers UK and **Motor Neurone Disease Association** have lots of information on their websites on talking to your employer about caring and your rights at work.

5 Think about your finances

Caring can take its toll on your finances and it's often something that you're not prepared for. You might face extra costs. You might see a rise in your electricity bills or make more use of your car or public transport for visits or appointments. You might also have to reduce your working hours or decide to give up work entirely.

Carers UK, Age UK, MS Society, TDLS, and other Carers support charities can help explain the impact caring might have on your finances and where you can access support, as well as provide you with advice on benefits. **Rethink Mental Illness**

6 Get connected through technology

There's a whole world of technology that could help make the home safer and your life as a carer easier.

While technology can never replace being with others, simple devices and apps can help people connect on a day-to-day basis. They may also help someone live independently for longer and give you peace of mind when you can't be around.

Technology can also help you connect with other carers through online forums like The Teesside Dementia Link Services face book page / on line chat providing emotional support.

7 Plan for an emergency

It's important to think about what you could do if something goes wrong or your situation changes suddenly.

Could family and friends help you? Do you have contact details handy to get in touch with people in an emergency? In our area there are emergency card schemes that have been set up for carers, this has your details on, who you care for and who to contact in an Emergency please ask us for one.

Try to update everything about the person you care for regularly and keep it in the same place. This could be treatment records, medication changes, admissions to hospital, and so on or use one of our free Missing Persons forms (MISPA)

teesside dementia link services

Person's Information sheet

MISPER

Paste Recent picture here

Paste old picture here

FULL NAME

NAME THEY PREFERRED TO BE CALLED BY.....

ADDRESS.....

POST CODE

DATE OF BIRTH

TEL

SEX MALE FEMALE OTHER

HAIR COLOUR

HAIR LINE / BALD

HEIGHT..... WEIGHT..... SKIN COLOUR.....

DISTINGUISHING MARKS / TATTOOS.....

MOBILITY

DO THEY DRIVE..... DO THEY HAVE ACCESS TO A VEHICLE

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

WHERE DO THEY LIKE TO GO / FREQUENT

WHAT TIME WERE THEY LAST SEEN

WHERE WERE THEY LAST SEEN

Talking to Teesside Dementia Link Services, or you Social Worker, or staff from the memory clinic may be helpful in thinking through potential issues. If you haven't had a carer's assessment, this is a great place to start